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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CASTLE DALE 4TH GRADE STUDENTS ASSIST UTAH AQUARIUM IN CREATING EDUCATIONAL EXHIBIT FOR AQUARIUM EXPANSION

From Utah to the Abyss and Back

Sandy, UT (May 2, 2013) – Castle Dale Elementary School 4th grade students will assist in creating an exhibit about ocean water pressure on Tuesday, May 7 at 10:30 a.m. at The Living Planet Aquarium, located at 725 E. 10600 S. in Sandy, Utah. The exhibit will be an educational feature in the Deep Sea Gallery at the new Loveland Living Planet Aquarium, a 136,000 square-foot, \$24 million expansion scheduled to open December 2013 in Draper.

The Deep Sea Gallery in the new Loveland Living Planet Aquarium will explore some of the deepest, most unknown areas of the ocean floor, far beyond the reach of sunlight. Visitors will discover how animals have adapted ways to survive and thrive in this dark, otherworldly ecosystem, where the water pressure from the sea above is so great that it would crush most living things. The Deep Sea Gallery will feature an exhibit designed to educate visitors about ocean water pressure.

Even though we do not feel it, 14.7 pounds per square inch (psi) of pressure are pushing down on our bodies as we rest at sea level. Our body compensates for this weight by pushing out with the same force. Since water is much heavier than air, this pressure increases as we venture into the water. Dive down into the ocean even a few feet, though, and a noticeable change occurs. You can feel an increase of pressure on your eardrums. This is due to an increase in hydrostatic pressure, the force per unit area exerted by a liquid on an object.

To travel into this high-pressure environment adjustments have to be made. Humans can travel three or four atmospheres and be OK. To go farther, submarines are needed. When it's too dangerous or expensive to send people to the ocean floor, researchers often send ROVs (remotely operated vehicles) to vent sites to take video, images and samples from the ocean floor.

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The 4th grade students of Castle Dale Elementary School in Castle Dale, Utah will participate in a fun way to drive home some of the peculiarities of a planet where very deep water covers some 65 percent of the surface. The students will sign their name on two Styrofoam objects. One of the objects will be sent to the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, placed inside an ROV and taken to ocean depths of up to 1500 meters, shrinking it into a small trophy for a lesson on the crushing weight of deep water. It will then be shipped back to Utah where it will eventually reunited with the original size object and placed on exhibit to help educate visitors about the wonders of the deep sea.

“Sometimes learning can be a challenge, so we thought it would be a fun and exciting way for some students from a small city in Utah to learn about the deep sea and also have the chance to put their name on something that has been to the depths of the ocean and back,” said Angie Hyde, Director of Marketing & Public Relations at The Living Planet Aquarium. “It’s definitely something they’ll remember forever and be able to show their children and grandchildren someday,” said Hyde.

About The Living Planet Aquarium

The mission of The Living Planet Aquarium is to inspire people to explore, discover and learn about Earth’s diverse ecosystems. Admission is \$9.95 per adult, \$7.95 per child, ages 3-17, and free for children ages 2 and under. The Aquarium, located at 725 E 10600 S in Sandy, Utah, is a non-profit organization. Open every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Aquarium is accessible to people with disabilities. For more information, call (801) 355-fish (3474) or visit thelivingplanet.com.

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